Scripture Light

About the

Gospel Ordinance

OF

Baptism:

In a LETTER to some Scrupulous Friends about it.

By a Sincere Lover of the Christian Community.

LONDON,

Printed for *Tho. Parkhurst* at the *Bible* and *Three Crowns* at the lower end of *Cheapside*, near *Mercers-Chappel*, 1695.

Christian Reader,

THe Design of this Epistolary Exercitation, about what Light the Holy Scriptures alone give concerning the Gospel Ordinance of Baptism, is not to iritate the Spirits of any, but to yield help to them who are or will be Conversant with their Bibles about it. It was penned on a private Occasion of satisfieing some persons, who, I am afraid, were resolved what they would do, before they read it. It is now printed because of the restless Endeavours of such Busie-bodies to puzzle such as are under Conviction, or may be New Converts, (who were never acquainted with the true State of this Ordinance, as I do heartily wish themselves were, or any Controversie about it) telling them it is not impossible for them to be saved if they believe, but they shall most certainly be so if they be re-baptised. This therefore is designed to obviate such Insinuations, and to help weak Christians to discern the way of Truth, that they may more comfortably walk in it. It is contracted into one sheet, that it might be with less Charge obtained, and with less Pains perused by those who need it, than larger Tracts. That it may therein succeed, thy Prayers are earnestly desired for the Lords Blessing on it, and on him who penned it, as thou hast heartily his for thy self, who would unfeignedly approve himself to be

Thine and the Churches Servant
for Jesus sake.

Grace,

Grace, Mercy and Peace be to you, from God our Father, and from our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

SIRS,

I Received yours on Lords-day Evening, and now heartily thank you for it: Though I have been exerciſed with Infirmities, and have much Work on my Hands this Week, yet I have taken what time I could ſpare to Conſider of and to Anſwer your Letter to me. I hope what you have written is in the Uprightneſs and Integrity of your Hearts, and that you have not firſt reſolved what to do, and then deſire to be adviſed: If you have done ſo, it is not Ingenious, and I can expect no great Fruit as to what I write to you; however I'll perform my Duty, and clear my Conſcience in this Matter to you, and what I ſhall Communicate I profeſs in the Preſence of God is the Truth as it is in Jeſus. That I may not be Confuſed in this Reply to what you write, I ſhall perform theſe four things:

1. Prove to you by Scripture that the Baptizing of Infants born in the Chriſtian Church is a New-Teſtament Ordinance.

2. That the Baptizing of Infants in the Church, or the admitting of the Adult into it

by Baptiſm, was not only, if at all, in Scripture-times by Dipping.

3. That the Re-baptizing of ſuch Believers as were Baptized in their Infancy, is unwarrantable.

4. That whatever ſweet Refreſhments from the Holy Spirit, and Spiritual Graces you can expect to enjoy by being Re-baptiſed, you have no ground for it, and you may obtain them by renewed Acts of Faith on your Infant-Baptiſm.

In your reading of all I ſuggeſt to you on theſe Heads, I humbly requeſt you to lay aſide all Prejudice, and to do as the *Bereans* did, *Acts* 17. 11. take your Bibles and Search the Scriptures daily, whether theſe things are not ſo as they are here quoted, and repreſented to you, and the Father of Lights give you a ſound Underſtanding in this and in all other Truths.

Firſt, That Infant-Baptiſm is a Goſpel-Ordinance, or that Infants born in the Chriſtian Church ought to be Baptized. This Truth is to be evinced from Scripture-Precept, Scripture-Example, and Scripture-Reaſon.

1. Scripture-Precept for Infant-Baptiſm is laid down in *Matthew* 28. 18, 19. *Jeſus ſpake unto them, All Power is given to me in Heaven and in Earth, going therefore, Diſciple ye all Nations, Baptizing them into the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Theſe Nations*, the Subject of this Ordinance, did

did consist of Humane Persons of both Sexes, and of all Ages, that is, of *Men*, *Women* and *Children*, which not only Scripture, as *Isaiah* 9. 3. but the Common Language of all Nations testifie. These are the Subjects of all God's Commands, *Exod.* 20. v. 1, to 18. *Deuteronomy* 4. 34, 40. and *Ch.* 5. *v.* 2, 3. and *Ch.* 29. *v.* 1, 10, 11, to 16. Of all God's Promises, *Gen.* 22. 18. *Psal.* 67. 2. & 82. 8. *Isaiah* 2. 2. Of all God's Threatnings, *Psal.* 9. 17. our Lord useth the same word of *Nations* here, in the same Sense and Meaning as *Moses* and all the Prophets had done before him. *These Nations* must be *Discipled* by the Apostles, according to Christ's Precept, and they must make them Disciples after that Pattern that God had set them, in his discipling *Abraham*, and his House and Nation before, as that of all Believers from *Adam* down along before him; which was done by God's revealing to these Persons his Covenant, and teaching them his Will, which they believed and consented to, as *Abraham*, *Gen.* 12. v. 1, 2. & *ch.* 15. *v.* 1, 6. & *ch.* 17. *v.* 1. 10, to 15. He discipled *Abraham*'s House, Male-Children, Infants and Servants, by Circumcision, *Ver.* 24, 25, 26, 27. by which Sign and Seal of the Covenant he engageth them to himself, and their Parents to nurture them up in the Knowledge of it, *Chap.* 17. 10. and *Chap.* 18. 19. So were the Apostles to Preach the Gospel, and to *offer Gods Covenant*, the good Tidings of Grace and Salvation, *to all*

Nations, to every rational Creature of them, *Mark* 16. 15. *Man*, *Woman* and *Child*, the Underſtanding part of them received it not only for their Perſons, but being Parents for the Uſe and Benefit of *their Seed*, Infants and Children. So *Paul* and *Barnabas* Evangelized the City of *Derbo*, and *Diſcipled many*, Acts 14. *v.* 21. The Fathers and Adult by Inſtruction, and their Infants by implicit Engagement. For as God offered himſelf to be a God to them and their Seed, not any that received him to be their own God, but conſented and received him to be the God of their Children, *Acts* 2. 39. Infants therefore being thus *diſcipled* muſt be baptized. Parents were not diſcipled in thoſe Nations alone, but with their Infant Seed, whom they did virtually in themſelves, actually and ſacramentally in their Perſons with themſelves, dedicate and devote them unto God by Baptiſm; and without them *Nations* are not *diſcipled*. The Apoſtles were to go inſtantly about this Work, according to their Commiſſion, and not to tarry till the Infants in all Nations were grown up. They are likewiſe as capable of being initiated and entred into all the Good of the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt, as any of the Adult were, and by this Comand of Chriſt ought to be ſo initiated into it by Baptiſm. That they are ſo capable, is evident by the Fathers putting his own Name on them,

as

as *Jacob* did on the Sons of *Joseph*, *Genesis* Ch. 48. v. 16. compared with *Numb.* Ch. 6. v. 27. by the Sons owning of them as Subjects to be blessed by him and his own Brethren, *Psalm* 22. *v.* 22. *Isaiah* Ch. 8. v. 18. *Mark* Ch. 10. v. 16. *Hebrews* Ch. 2. v. 12. by the Holy Ghost owning of them, and sanctifiying some of them in the Womb, *Jeremiah* Ch. 1. v. 5. and *Luke* Ch. 1. v. 15, 41. *Galatians* Ch. 1. v. 15.

2. Scripture-Example evinceth, that Infants in the Christian Church have been Baptized. Tho' I premise, that if there were no Infants Baptized in the Scripture Times, yet it followeth not thence that Infants ought not to be Baptized; the Omission of the Practice of it cannot null the Law for it, no more than the Omission of Circumcision by *Israel* for forty Years in the Wilderness disanulled that Law; or because that the Name of *Infants* Baptized is not written in so many Letters, that therefore they were not Baptized, for by the same Reason no Woman must receive the Lords Supper, because we read not in so many Syllables that any did. It is evident then from Scripture that as our Lord commanded, the Apostles *discipled and baptized Nations*, and in them Children, who were as capable of *Discipling* as the Elder Persons. This is Positively confirmed in their baptizing *Houshold*s or *Families*, for where they baptized Parents, there they baptized their *Houses* or *Houshold*s, and not one of these were

baptized without a Parent, *Acts* 16. 14, 15. So was baptized *Lydia* and *her Houſhold*; the Jailor and his *Houſe*; He and all his, *Ver.* 31, 32, 33. *Criſpus* with *all his Houſe*, *Acts* 18. 8. the *Houſhold of Stephanus*, as 1 *Cor.* 1. 16. *Houſhold* or *Family*, *His* and *Houſe* when ſpoken of Perſons is an *Hebrew* Term, to ſet out the Children or Seed of the Houſe, whether Infants or Adult Children. So is it ſaid to *Noah*, *Come thou and all thy Houſe*, Himſelf, Wife and Children, *Gen.* 7. 1, 7. *I ſhall be deſtroyed*, ſaith *Jacob*, *and my Houſe*, *Gen.* 34. 30. *Joſeph* ſaid to his Brethren, and to his Fathers Houſe, *Gen.* 46. 31. Them and *their Houſes* were ſwallowed up, *Numb.* 16. 27, 32. *Jerubbaal and his Houſe*, Judg. 9. 16. and ſo concerning *Eli*'s Houſe, 1 *Sam.* 3. 12, 13, 14. Scriptures multiply, wherein *Houſe*, *Houſhold* or *Family*, did ſignifie *Children*. If now Infants were not baptized in theſe *Houſes* or *Houſholds* inſtanced in to be baptized, it muſt be, either becauſe they had no ſuch Infants in them, which can never be proved by Scripture, or that they were not Subjects capable to be baptized, which hath been already proved by Scripture that they were. Parents and their Houſes or Houſholds do include Infants, the Adult being for the moſt part at their own diſpoſe, whilſt Infants are at their Parents diſpoſe. Amongſt both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, where Parents were Converted and Baptized, they brought over their Children with them, as being one Perſon in Law-ſenſe with themſelves, and

and ſo covenanting in and with them. Therefore mark it, an Husband might believe and not the Wife, the Wife might believe and not the Husband, yet is it not ſaid to either of theſe Relations, believe thou Husband and thou ſhalt ſave thy Wife, believe thou Wife and thou ſhalt ſave thy Husband; but to Parents it is ſaid, believe thou, and thou ſhalt be ſaved and thy Houſe, *Acts* 16. 31. which imports in it, the enjoyment of the outward means of Salvation, which to thoſe who die in their Infancy may Seal to them their Eternal Salvation; and will ſo to thoſe who ſurvive it, if they neglect not ſo great Salvation. That Infants of believing Parents are chiefly concerned in this, is evident, becauſe the Adult in every Family believing ſhould be ſaved, tho' their Parents did not believe, compare *Acts* 11. 14. with *Luke* 19. 9. And in the very Commiſſion it ſelf for baptizing, the Lord mentioneth as much Infants, as he doth either Man, Woman, or Adult.

3. From Scripture-Reaſon it is evident, that Infants in the Church have right to be, and were baptized. For, all ſuch who have due qualifications for Baptiſm ought to be baptized, but all the Infants of believing Parents have ſuch qualifications, and therefore they ought to be baptized. All that qualifieth for this Ordinance muſt refer either to *Gods allowance* of it, or the *Perſons capacity* for it. 1. As to *Gods allowance* of it, I argue thus, all ſuch with whom God hath

hath made his Covenant, and never reverſed it, are qualified for Baptiſm, and muſt be admitted thereunto, but God hath made his Covenant with the Infants of Believers, and never reverſed it, therefore they are qualified for Baptiſm, and muſt be admitted to it. The Truth of this appears from the Connection there is between Gods Covenant and the initial Seal of it. Whoever by Covenant are taken into Gods Church muſt be initiated thereinto by the Seal of it, now there is no other initiating Seal but *Baptiſm*, Circumciſion that was ſetled for a time a Seal of the Covenant is abrogated long ſince. Gods Covenant was ſetled with Parents and Children in the Church from the fall of *Adam*, as appears by Sacrifice, *Gen.* 4. 1, 2, 3, 4. compared with *Ver.* 25. 26. and *chap.* 6. 2. This was made more plainly known to *Abraham*, with an additional Seal to it, *Gen.* 17. 10. This Covenant is ſtill in force with Believers and with their ſeed. The Redeemer hath under the Goſpel altered the Seal, but not the Subjects of it, who are now to be *baptized*, as they were under the Old Teſtament Adminiſtration to be circumciſed. This Covenant can never be diſannulled, *Gal.* 3. 15, 16, 17. Thoſe that are Subjects of it, both Parents and Children, are to be baptized, *Acts* 2. 38, 39. As God hath made this Covenant with them, ſo Chriſt hath executed it to the Infants of believing *Jews* and *Gentiles*, *John* 17. 2. He hath finiſhed the Work God hath given him to do,

which

which was to fulfil the Promiſe confirmed to *Abraham*, and to the Churches Infants, the Seed of Believers. The Apoſtle aſſerts it to the *Gentiles*, *Rom.* 15. 8, 9. In the Tranſlation of the Church of God from the *Jews* unto the *Gentiles*, into which Church he hath received Believers and their Seed, as he hath rejected thoſe Unbelievers and their Seed, *Mat.* 21. 13. compare *Rom.* 11. 11, 12, 13. And as God allowed this admittance of Church Infants to Baptiſm, by tranſlating his Kingdom to the believing *Gentiles*, ſo Chriſt *proſelited* or gathered theſe little ones into his Church or Kingdom, *Mat.* 19. 13, 14, 15. *Mark* 10. 13, 14, 15. *Luke* 18. 15, 16, 17. as they were Members of it, and therefore ought to be baptized. By the Redeemers appointment Infants were initiated into his Church under the Old Teſtament by the Sign and Seal of his Covenant, *Circumciſion*, *Gen.* 17. 10. but now under the Goſpel are they to be entred into it by *Baptiſm*, which ſucceedeth by his appointment in the room of the other, *Col.* 2. 11, 12. Now if God hath ordered it to be done, and it was done, as is teſtified by the Spirit in 1 *Cor.* 10. 1, 2. and this was never reverſed by him, then God alloweth it to his Church at this day. 2. As to *Infants capacity* for Baptiſm, I argue thus, All who are Subjects *capable* of Baptiſm are to be baptized, but Infants born in the Church are capable of Baptiſm. This is evident by Scripture inſtance, for they have a Covenant-capacity

ty for it which was never reverſed, *Gen.* 17. 10, 11, 12. compare *Acts* 2. 39. Chriſt was the Mediator of the Covenant to *Iſraelitiſh* Parents and Children, and ſo he is to believing *Gentiles* and their Infant-Seed, *Iſa.* 49. 6, 8. compare *Rom.* 15. 8, 9. They have a capacity to be Gods Children, and are ſo owned by him, *Iſa.* 8. 18. *Ezek.* 16. 20, 21. *Rom.* 9. 4. *Heb.* 2. 13. They are Chriſts Diſciples, *Acts* 15. 10. and to be received in Chriſts Name as ſuch, *Mat.* 18. 5. *Mark* 9. 41. *Luke* 9. 47, 48. They are Chriſts Servants, *Lev.* 25. 54, 55. Subjects of his Kingdom, *Mat.* 19. 14. *Mark* 10. 14. *Luke* 18. 16. The Infant Children of Believers being all theſe, are capable, or qualified Subjects for Baptiſm. They are alſo Church-Members, ſo ſetled in the Covenant of Grace from the firſt grant of it, and ſo continued throughout the times of *Abraham*, *Moſes*, and all the Prophets, and were never ſince excluded from being ſo. In all the changes in the *Iſraelitiſh* Church, the Eſſentials did always abide, the material part, of which were their Members. As Infants are Church-members, and ſo invited to Baptiſm, they have alſo endowments fit for it. They are Believers in Chriſts own account, *Mat.* 18. 5, 6. *Mark* 9. 36, 37. and made Patterns by him to Elder Perſons, *Mat.* 18. 2, 3, 4. Are to be received in his Name, and therefore have relation to, and an Intereſt in him. They are included in Believing Parents, and are ſaid to do what they profeſs,

Deut.

Deut. 29. 10, 11, 12. They are Relative Believers, born in, and belong unto the Houſhold of Faith, *Pſal.* 22. 30. and are called ſuch as the *Iſraelites* were. How many of them are of Gods Elect, and ſo have the Spirit of Grace and Faith in them; and whether not ſo many as of the Adult, is a ſecret to us, which Heaven only can reveal, *Luke* 1. 15. Laſtly, Infants in the Church are in the account of God the Spirit, Holy, as well as Believers, *Exod.* 19. 6. *Deut.* 7. 6. and *Chap.* 14. 2, 21. *Rom.* 11. 16. and 2 *Cor.* 7. 14. Some of them poſitively by the Infuſion of Holineſs into their Spirits, *Jer.* 1. 5. External poſitive Sanctification or Conſecration is by Covenant-conſtitution on all Church-Infants, *Exod.* 13. 2. Whence God calls them His, *Rom.* 11. 16. And ſo all the branches are Relatively Holy. Infants in the Church being thus Believers, and Holy, they have a right to, and ought to be baptized. In the cloſe, I adde this, that there is not one Word in Scripture, forbidding the baptizing of the Infants of Believers; and if the Name of *Infants* is not expreſt in the Commiſſion for baptizing, no more are the Names of *Men* or *Women*, which ſhews, that it was ſo known and unqueſtionable Truth among the *Jews*, and in Scripture-times, as well as with all Converſant with their Cuſtoms, that there was no need to read it more expreſly. No Perſon can be any more ſecure, that the Adult ſhall not Apoſtatize after Baptiſm, than Believers can

that

that their Infant Seed ſhall not.

2. That the Baptizing of Infants in the Chriſtian Church, or the admitting of the Adult into it by Baptiſm in Scripture times, was neither only, nor moſtly, if at all, by *Plunging* the Perſon into the Water. As to what is pleaded for this from that Word the Commiſſion *Baptizing*, Mat. 28. 19. It can no where in the New Teſtament be clearly proved to ſignifie *Dipping* or *Plunging* the whole Perſon under the Water. The Word properly ſignifying *Diping* in the New Teſtament is another Word, and ſo truly tranſlated in *Mat.* 26. 23. *Mark* 14. 20. *John* 13. 26. And the known uſe of this Word *Baptize* among *Greek* Authors themſelves, who beſt underſtood their own Language, doth confirm it to ſignifie *waſhing*. *Baptizing* is a general Word for *Waſhing*, by applying Water ſeveral ways, either to Perſons or things, as by Effuſion of it on them, *Exod.* 30. 18, 19. 2 *King.* 3. 11. *Luke* 11. 38. or ſprinkling of them with them, *Mark* 7. 4. *The Application of the Element of Water to the Fleſh of the Perſon is the thing* that the Injunction of Chriſt doth inforce in *Baptizing*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 20. Not only the Propriety of the Word *Baptizing* doth evacuate this work of *Dipping*, but from the preſumed inſtances given of it, it can never be proved that thoſe who were baptized by *John* the Baptiſt, or by Chriſts Diſciples were ſo dipped. Thô it is ſaid, that Jeſus when baptized, went up ſtraight-way *out of the Water*,

ter, it doth not appear that he was *dipped* or *plunged* into it, *Mat.* 3. 13. It was not unlikely that he had water *poured* or *ſprinkled* on him in it, for as ſoon as he came out of the Water he betook himſelf to Prayer, *Luke* 3. 21. Which Work, if his Garments that covered him had been all wet, as they muſt have been by his plunging in the Water, would have been inconvenient, till they were ſhifted or dried, for Chriſt did not carry a Ward-robe with him. That he was baptized Naked can never be proved. He who dried his Diſciples Feet, after he had waſhed them, *John* 13. 4, 5. before he inſtructed them in their Duty, would have taken ſome care of his own Perſon after ſuch a dipping before he went to Prayer. Neither the places where *John* or they did Baptize, did neceſſitate their dipping in them, as is ſurmiſed. As thoſe who were baptized by *John* in *Jordan*, their going down into, and coming out of the Water, importing no more then their ſtanding at the brink of the Water on dry ground, as the Prieſts that bare the Ark of the Lord before *Iſrael* in their paſſage over *Jordan*, when they came to the brink of the water of *Jordan*, did ſtand ſtill in *Jordan*, *Joſhua* 3. 13, 15, 17. from whence the Waters had retired. This is much more probable, then his ſtanding in the River and plunging ſo continually Multitudes in it as the Hiſtory declares, *Mat.* 3. 5, 6. Neither doth *Johns* Baptizing in *Ænon* countenance his *Dipping*, becauſe there

was

was *much Water* there. The Words are, *many Waters*, and such as were uncapable of immersion or plunging into them. Whether *Ænon* were the Name of a Town or Village, or plain Land, I shall not determine. It seems to be scituated in the South of *Judah*, which for the most part was a dry and barren Land, where were few or no Springs, as appears by the Daughters of *Calebs* request, *Judg.* 1. 15. In this plain of *Ænon* there were many Springs of Water, from which Fountains might run many Streams or Rivulets of Water, for the accommodation of the Inhabitants about it, but not of such depth as to serve for this pretended use, as hath been testified by Persons that have seen them. Alike Fountain or Spring to which was that where *Philip* baptized the *Ethiopian* Eunuch, in *Acts* 8. 36, 38. Yet were they never so capable, can it be demonstrated that the baptized Persons were dipped in them. Neither do the Allusions which the Holy Spirit useth in asserting the effects of Baptism, any way Countenance this *Dipping*, as in *Rom.* 6. 4. Being *buried* with him *by Baptism*, and *Col.* 2. 12. which signifieth no more than our having Communion with him in his Burial, as well as in his Death, as to the Death of Sin in us, by Baptism. It is evident in the General Custom of most Nations, that burying of Persons is not by dipping them into the Earth, but by pouring on, or casting Earth upon them, and until that be cast on them, they remain unburied.

buried. So that whatever force theſe expreſſions have, of *going down into*, or *coming up out of the Water*, or *burying by Baptiſm*, it was impoſſible for Perſons to be baptized by Dipping or Plunging them under the Water in many places, for neither were the three thouſand Converts by dipping in one day, *Acts* 2. 41. nor the *Samaritan* Believers, *Acts* 8. 12, 13. nor *Paul* in the Houſe of *Judas*, *Acts* 9. 18. nor the Jailor and his Houſe in the Priſon, *Acts* 16. 33. nor thoſe baptized on the Graves of the Martyrs, 1 *Cor.* 15. 29. nor the ſick or diſeaſed that were baptized in their beds. The Lords own Act in the baptizing of *Iſrael*, might ſatisfie any as to the *manner* or *mode* of this Work, and which by the Spirit is charged on all Chriſtians, that they remain not ignorant of, but know and remember it for their own imitation, in 1 *Cor.* 10. 1, 2. That the Lord did baptize *Iſrael* by pouring down, or ſhowring Water out of the Clouds upon them, when they were paſſing on dry ground thorough the *Red Sea*, ſee *Pſal.* 77. 11. and 68. 7, 9. This way of Effuſion and Sprinkling with Water the baptized, is beſt reſembling and ſignally exhibiting what was intended by our Lord in this Ordinance, both as to what was foretold of it by the Prophets in *Prov.* 1. 23. and *Iſa.* 44. 1, 3. and *Zach.* 12. 10. compare *Mat.* 3. 11. *Acts* 2. 1, 2, 3. Concerning the Effuſion of his Spirit on them, and the ſprinkling of them with his Blood, *Iſa.* 52. 15. and *Ezek.*

36. 24, 25, 26, 27. Fulfilled under the Goſpel, in *Heb.* 9. 14, 19, 23. and *Chap.* 12. 24. compare *Eph.* 5. 26, 27. *Rev.* 1. 5. The pouring of this Water in Baptiſm on the *Face* of the Perſon baptized, is moſt proper, as a part ſymbolically ſufficient to repreſent the whole Perſon, as well as the *Feet*, in *John* 13. 10. As Chriſt taught there his Diſciples. And by *Face* in Scripture is uſually ſet out and expreſt the whole Perſon, and one Perſon is diſtinguiſhed from another, read *Gen.* 48. 11. *Eccleſ.* 8. 1. *Gal.* 1. 22. A Seal Confirming the laſt Will and Teſtament of any Perſon, is not done by applying the Teſtament to the Seal, but the Seal to the Teſtament, and to one part of it. And Baptiſm on the Face is the proper badge of thoſe who are ſealed his, and have his Fathers Name written in their Foreheads; by which the open Profeſſion of being his Members and Servants is held out unto the ſinful World, *Rev.* 7. 3. *Chap.* 14. 1.

3. That the Rebaptizing of ſuch who are born in the Chriſtian Church, and have been baptized in their Infancy, is unwarrantable.

This appeareth to be an unwarrantable Practiſe in ſome Chriſtians, becauſe there is no Precept for it, no Promiſe made to it, nor Example of it in all the Scripture. The initiating Sign and Seal of the Covenant, is but once to be applied to its proper Subject, and no more by Chriſts Inſtitution, and there is a total Silence about any reverſing it. Thoſe Adult

dult Perſons Recorded in Scripture were Converts, either from *Judaiſm* or *Gentiliſm* to Chriſtianity, and were no Members of the Chriſtian Church before they were baptized, and by Baptiſm they were initiated into it, as appears *Acts* 2.41. and *Chap.* 8. 12, 13. and *Chap.* 10. 48. and *Chap.* 16. 31, 33. To ſuch Adult ſtrangers the rule was, to teach them firſt, and on their Profeſſion of Repentance towards God, and Faith in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to baptize them. But no ſuch Rule was for them born in the Church of Chriſt, they were diſcipled by baptizing in their Infancy, and where they were really and certainly ſo, Baptiſm was not to be repeated to them; if there were any Defect in the Eſſentials of Baptiſm (which is not to be judged by Mens Fancies, but by the Word) then that might be ſupplied by the juſt and regular Adminiſtration of it.

4. That whatſoever ſweet Refreſhments by the Holy Spirit and ſpiritual Graces you can expect to enjoy by being re-baptized, you have no Grouud for it, and you may obtain them by renewed Acts of Faith on your Infant-Baptiſm.

I ſuppoſe you do not intend by thoſe Enjoyments and Refreſhments, the Effuſion of the Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, eſpecially that of Tongues, which were to fit for Preaching-work the Perſons who enjoyed them, as they were diſpenſed in the Primitive Times. Theſe were given ſometimes before Bap-

tiſm, *Acts* Ch. 10. v. 45, 47, 48. and after Baptiſm by impoſition of Hands, *Acts* Ch. 8. v. 15, 16, 17. Ch. 19. v. 6. But never in or by Baptiſm, as the Scripture teſtifieth: You muſt mean therefore by ſweet Enjoyments of the Holy Ghoſt, and ſpiritual Refreſhments which rebaptized Perſons have felt, ſuch ſpiritual Bleſſings as Peace, Joy, Righteouſneſs, and the Love of God ſhed abroad in your Hearts by the Holy Spirit, as *Romans* Ch. 15. v. 13, 14. and Ch. 5. v. 1, 5. and Ch. 14. v. 17. and 1 *Peter* Ch. 1. v. 8, 9. Now you expect thoſe to be wrought in you, or the ſenſe of them, either by the work of Rebapzing, for which you have no promiſe in Gods Word; or you expect them as they are Covenant Bleſſings, which the Ordinance of Baptiſm being a Sign or Seal of it may Seal to you. This is already done for you in your Infant Baptiſm, you have had therein the Sign and Seal of the Covenant as fully as you can have by repeating it: Your Duty and Work therefore is not to repeat it, but to draw forth the Virtue of it by Faith for your own Comfort as all the Power in Heaven and Earth by the Inſtitutor hath made it effectual thereunto. For inſtance, if

1. You are in Doubt of your Relation to God, or his to you, look to your Baptiſm as God ſealing that Relation in his to you, *Galatians* Ch. 3. v. 27.

2. In Caſe of want of greater Meaſure of Sanctification, look to this Seal of it to you, *Coloſſians* 2. 12.

3. In

3. In the ſenſe of your want of ſpiritual Bleſſings made over to you in the Covenant, eye your Baptiſm ſecuring your being bleſſed with them, *Gen.* 22. 18. and *Eph.* 1. 3.

4. In Caſe of flagging and falling ſhort in Duty, look to your Baptiſm as a quickning Sign to ſtir you up to all Diligence, as *Romans* Ch. 6 v. 4, 5, 11.

5. In Caſe of Doubts, and Want of Aſſurance, view your Baptiſms confirming Gods Covenant and your Heart, *Romans* Ch. 4. v. 11. *Hebrews* Ch. 6. v. 17. 18. and Ch. 10. v. 22. *Coloſſians* Ch. 2. v. 2, 7.

6. In Caſe of prevailing Corruptions, Mortification to them is ſealed to you in your Baptiſm, *Romans* Ch. 6. v. 3, 6.

7. The Great Promiſe of the Holy Spirits dwelling in you, and your Participiation of its Operations is ſealed to you in this Ordinance, *Luke* Ch. 11. v. 13. *John* Ch. 14. v. 16, 17, 26. and Ch. 16. v. 7, 13, 14. Compare 1 *Corinthians* Ch. 1. v. 12, 13.

8. In midſt of Temptation of all Kinds and Degrees, Fear of Apoſtacy, of Death, or of coming ſhort of Glory, look by faith on your Baptiſm as a Seal of Gods eternal Salvation to you, *Mark* Ch. 16. v. 16. 1 *Peter* Ch. 3. v. 22. and Ch. 5. v. 7. to 11. Renewed Baptiſm can convey no more to you as to the Covenant, then your Infant Baptiſm doth, and hath already done, and by Chriſts Law this Seal of it is once to be enjoyed and no more.

more. If you have not those spiritual Refreshments from it, you have been wanting in Faith, Prayer, and Walking as to the Improvement of all these Blessings which God hath already sealed to you, and which he is ready more fully to make you sensible of in the Enjoyment of, the other Seal of his Everlasting Testament conveying it, which must be often repeated and enjoyed by you, 1 *Corinthians*, ch. 11. v. 26. But Baptism must not.

I have wholly waved what is not scriptural in this Essay, as the constant Practice of the Churches of Christ throughout the successive Ages unto this day, in baptizing of the Churches Infants. There is no Person recorded in History opposing it for above 300 years after Christ. That the *Catechumens* preparing by Instructions for Baptism in the second *Century* were not persons born of Believers in the Church, but Converts from *Heathenism* to Christianity. That as to Infants baptized when they were grown up, they were made Adult Members of the Church by solemn personal Covenant-renewing, and Confirmation by Prayer and laying on of Hands. The use of *Baptisteria* first erected of Stone, and placed in their Temples in the *4th. Century*, makes against dipping of the Persons of Adult in them, and however it might be of Infants in that degenerate Age from the Primitive Institutions; but I know one Word of Scripture is of more Weight with you than all Arguments drawn from Antiquity.

tiquity. Having therefore given you Light from thence as to this Ordinance of Baptiſm, and your Duty about it, I humbly implore the Father of Lights to give you Eyes of Underſtanding enlightned to ſee with, and further Degrees of Divine Light to ſee by, and to unvail this Myſtery to you, and by his Holy Spirit guide you into all Truth. Chriſtians have different Degrees of Light, yet ought to, and muſt live in Love one with another, wherein we have attained to walk by the ſame Rule, and mind the ſame thing, and where we have not attained, to wait on God to reveal it to us. I Salute you in the Lord, and humbly Pray to him that he would make you Partakers of all ſpiritual Bleſſings in Heavenly Things in Chriſt Jeſus, and that your Families may proſper and be built up by him to the Perfecting of his own. In him I am,

SIRS,

June 11th. 1691.

A moſt ſincere Lover of you and the whole Chriſtian Community, and yours and theirs Servant for Jeſus ſake.

Mr.

Mr. *Turner's* Poſtſcript in the *Hiſtory Of all Religions.*

THE *General Conſent, and almoſt Univerſal Practice, not only of all* Chriſtendom, *but all the World,* Jews, Gentiles, Mahometans, *Chriſtians of all Sects,* Proteſtants, Papiſts, Greeks, Armenians, Muſcovites, Mengrelians, Indians *of St.* Thomas, Abiſſines, *&c. in uſing, time out of mind, for hundreds of years, in places diſtant thouſands of miles, ſome ſolemn initiating Ceremony at the firſt admiſſion of Children (not adult) into the Society and Communion of their Religion, which intimateth this to be at firſt of divine Inſtitution.*

FINIS.